

Surely the dredge never rendered more sorry service to science than when it was made to yield up this "remarkable confirmation."

It is with a sense of amazement, therefore, that I have in vain searched the numerous writings of Drs. Carpenter and Thomson for any thing in the shape of satisfactory, or even generally consistent, evidence to justify so many hasty assumptions and so many mere assertions put forth as *facts* under cover of expressions alleging that they are "well known," or "there cannot be the least doubt," &c. &c. It is obvious that the entire significance of *Bathybius* rested on the truth or fallacy of the supposition that it *lives*, and is "an independent" and "indefinite" organism. Were further proof needed to show that Drs. Carpenter and Thomson recognized this fact, it is to be found in their observation that "*the indefinite protoplasmic expansion named Bathybius is amongst the most important results obtained by the sounding-apparatus*"*. They might with truth have added by the "*Dredge*."

In one expression of Prof. Wyville Thomson's, when referring to the advanced school of German naturalists, I heartily concur—namely, "in the infinite capacity of the '*Urschleim*' for improvement in every conceivable direction."

Regarding the true origin and functions of the protoplasmic, *non-living* substance which is found associated with certain deep-sea deposits, I shall do my best to give an account in a future communication.

XLIV.—*Description of a supposed new Actinura from the Dafla Hills.* By Major H. H. GODWIN-AUSTEN, F.R.G.S., F.Z.S., &c., Deputy Superintendent, Topographical Survey of India.

AMONG the birds collected by me on the Expedition into the Dafla hills, Assam, last winter, one of the most interesting forms is the *Actinura* I now describe. As might be expected, its nearest ally is *A. nipalensis*, Hodgs., the coloration above being very similar on the back and tail, but with less rufous barring. The crest, however, is quite different; and in this respect the species approaches *A. Waldeni* from the Naga hills, on the south of the Brahmaputra valley, only that the crest is far fuller. The general blotchy streakiness of the throat

* In a communication to the Royal Society dated June 17, 1869. See Proceedings.

and breast is also a mark of connexion with *A. Waldeni*. On comparison, it is seen that *Actinura daflaensis* bears the same relation to *nipalensis* that *Waldeni* does to *Egertoni*.

The genus is a very well-marked one; and we can now record from the Indian region five species (including *A. Ramsayi* from Tonghoo, in Burmah, described by Viscount Walden in 'Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist.' for June 1875), viz.:—1. *A. Egertoni*, Gould; 2. *A. nipalensis*, Hodgson; 3. *A. Waldeni*, Godwin-Austen; 4. *A. daflaensis*, Godwin-Austen; 5. *A. Ramsayi*, Walden. The last is a very distinct and interesting bird, a departure from the East-Himalayan type, but yet in every point a true *Actinura*.

Actinura daflaensis, n. sp.

Male. Above—head ash-brown; feathers in front spatulate, behind elongated into a full crest, narrowly pale-edged; the ash tint pales on back of neck, and merges into the strong rusty brown of the back and upper tail-coverts; base of tail-feathers of same colour, followed by four or five black bars, and the terminal half all black, the three outer tipped white, with a slight tendency to barring on the extreme outer web; side of head ash-grey, the ear-coverts with light silky reflections; shoulder of wing rusty brown; first primary coverts tipped with grey, forming a distinct narrow band, the last (covering the first seven primaries) black, forming a patch; the primaries are sienna-brown, outermost edged with hoary grey, black on inner webs and extremities, and narrowly barred with black on the terminal outer web; secondaries evenly and narrowly barred black and pale olivaceous umber. Beneath—the chin and throat pale dingy white, becoming a dirty ochry ash on the breast, with a blurry striation particularly on the throat; flanks and under tail-coverts rusty brown; tail beneath ashy black, the outermost feathers distinctly barred. Bill dark horny, legs the same; irides —?

Length 7·5 inches, wing 3·5, tail 3·2, tarsus 1·3, bill at front 0·68.

Hab. In high forest at 7000 feet, Daffa hills, and first shot on Shengorh Peak in February.

I trust to give a figure of this bird in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal as soon as I have completed the list of birds collected in the Daffa hills, which is now being worked out.